



ANNUAL REPORT

2022

1 April, 2021 —
31 March, 2022



more than a meal



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A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

This Annual Report attempts to capture what's happened at and through Soul from April 2021 to March 2022. To be honest it's a small reflection of the everyday engagement with some of our city's most vulnerable. No day is the same.



Our Community Response Throughout this period, we are continually surprised and greatly encouraged by the generosity of our community. This ranges from a student saving up pocket money, business sponsorship and professional expertise offered, from food appeals to our annual Sleepout. Large numbers of people doing something resources and empowers our teams everyday to provide not just a meal but delivering a wide range of practical help and vital support. Soul is a **“Compassionate community response to some deep community needs”**.

Our Guests are our motivation. No day is the same at Soul and every life brings a unique story that we engage in. It's both encouraging and heartbreaking. In the midst of some extremely complex situations life changing stories are continually emerging. Our staff and volunteer teams are wholeheartedly throwing everything into bringing help, hope and healing to our guests. Thanks to them Soul is a place where **“We will do all we can with whatever we have for whoever comes through our doors”**.

Our New Home. For many years now **Westpac** have looked after us with a venue, rent free in the CBD. Knowing this season would close one day we were blown away when the **Ian and Shirley Norman Foundation** approached us. This has led to a 10-year rent free venue in the CBD being offered. Certainly, this news is a game changer for us and our future! As site and timelines become clear we know sometime this year we will be in a new home!

When Soul was established in 2003 to reach out to those on the streets with a hot meal no one would have dreamed of what it has become. I have no doubt the conviction and passion to humbly serve vulnerable guests remains the same today as it was back then.

THANK YOU for partnering with us this year. Some for the first time, some who've journeyed with us for a long time, Thankyou!

RICK PROSSER CEO SOUL CAFE TRUST CHAIRMAN

LOCATION

The newly launched Ian and Shirley Norman Foundation, based in Newcastle, is keen to provide financial assistance to community organisations that focus on services that empower communities, keep people safe from harm, and walk with the traditional custodians of Australia. At Soul Café we are privileged to be invited to partner with the Ian and Shirley Norman Foundation. They have encouraged us to call their building our building and we are deeply grateful for that invitation.

The Foundation's Chair, Tracy Norman, said "We want to be known as an innovative Foundation that provides long term funding, is prepared to take risks, as well as one that really listens to the people we support. We are thrilled and excited to be partnering with Soul Cafe to provide you with a new home for the next 10 years. Our support will allow you to concentrate on your exceptional service delivery that is so needed in the Newcastle region, and hopefully also provide a unique opportunity to take Soul Café's work to the next level".



"We feel a real connection between our two organisations, and we look forward to growing with the Soul Cafe and to stretching and being stretched". **Tracy Norman**, Ian and Shirley Norman Foundation.

Soul Café is also deeply, deeply grateful to **Westpac**. For the last decade Westpac provided Soul Café with a rent free home on the corner of Hunter and Watt streets, Newcastle. In the home Westpac provide countless guests were welcomed and lives were transformed. This was a significant in-kind donation, equating to an estimated saving of over \$250,000 in value every year. The Soul Café trustees, staff and volunteers are greatly appreciative of the support of Westpac over the years and would like to thank Westpac for their commitment to serving Newcastle's most vulnerable people.



Soul Big
Picture Story



SOUL AT A GLANCE

OUR LUNCH GUESTS

77% MALE 

23% FEMALE 



377 different individuals attending meals monthly



29 highest guest attendance in a month



MORE THAN A MEAL

OUR PANTRY GUESTS

67% MALE 

33% FEMALE 

183 different individuals attending pantry fortnightly

27 people on average attend each pantry service

 **938**
Meals Weekly

 **6,080**
Pantry Hampers

 **1,432**
Christmas Hampers

46,868 total meals provided

141 people Covid vaccinated

233 actively volunteers

781 hours volunteered each week

250,000+ conversations with vulnerable people

Stayed open face to face all through Covid

MEAL AND PANTRY DATA 1 APRIL 2021 – 31 MARCH, 2022

Soul Café is more than a meal however the free meals are a significant part of Soul Cafes contribution to the vulnerable community in Newcastle.

- 28,628** total meals and food care packs 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022
- 6,080** total Open Pantry hampers distributed 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022
- 1,432** Christmas & New Years Hampers distributed
- 46,868** total meal equivalents 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022 (if an open pantry hamper is considered as equating to 3 meals).

TOTAL MEALS

Includes all Meals, Food Care Packs and Open Pantry Hampers

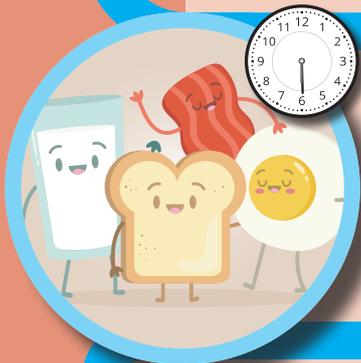


Each meal is actually more than a meal. A hot meal and a welcoming conversation is not just a full belly, it can be a self esteem boost, it can prepare a guest for a meeting with Centrelink, it can be respite from a frustrating experience, it can free up money in a tight budget for medication. For a vulnerable guest at Soul, each meal is actually much, much more than a meal.

Food is purchased or is donated by food rescue organizations, businesses in the community including valued supporters Top Cut Foods, Alan Steggles Food Services, and the Butchery on Brunner. Food rescue contributors include, SecondBite at Coles Kotara, Marketown, Mayfield and Waratah, Nandos Kotara, Ozharvest and Foodbank.

A WEDNESDAY IN THE LIFE OF SOUL

BREAKFAST – 7am



It's cold outside but comfortable inside Soul. The dining room lights are on, the whole place is fresh & clean. Cheerful music is playing to provide atmosphere. The breakfast crew are on site preparing food, setting the atmosphere, cleaning tables and getting ready to talk to guests. The breakfast crew are catching up with regulars and meeting new guests who might have just had a cold, hard, unforgiving night out on the streets.

RECEPTION – 9am



The level 2 dining room has been full of activity for a while now but around 9am reception and level 1 springs to life. Our social worker and mental health clinician have been busy for a while assisting guests. Staff & volunteers are answering phones, responding to emails & voice messages, accepting donations / deliveries, the Soul laundry is making sure guests' clothes are clean, dry and folded ready for guests to pick up at Lunch Service. The reception crew are also working with our attending services ranging from chiropractors, audiologists, doctor clinics, hairdressers, alcohol, narcotics, and gambling anonymous, by booking and directing guests to their door here at Soul.

CHANGEOVER – 9am



Stomachs are full, the kitchen & dining room is clean again and as the breakfast team rolls out the lunch team rolls in. The deliveries team are out and about already and in the next few hours they will pick up from Coles Waratah, Marketown, Kotara & Mayfield. They will also make stops at Top Cut meats and The Butchery on Brunner and an array of other donors.

TEAM MEETING – 10am



At 10.00am the whole family (staff & volunteers) get together for morning tea and a team chat. It's our Soul equivalent of the whole family turning off the TV and having dinner together. This is a time to invest into our volunteers, encourage, equip, share stories on Soul and involves a lot of Thank-Yous to our volunteer force donating their time to serve at Soul.

LUNCH AT SOUL – 10:30am



There are a number of guests already at the door when Soul opens for lunch. Guests are welcomed through the door at 10:30am for tea and coffees. The Kitchen team handle the cooking, serving and cleaning. Soul is much more than just a meal and the Floor team are talking with our guests and making them feel welcome. The Mental Health Clinician and Social Worker are speaking with Guests. Soul Café is a convergence of help and as the Floor team chat to guests they let them know what attending services are available today. The reception team are still answering calls, accepting donations, booking guests into services, helping with prescriptions, managing the laundry, giving hygiene packs and other toiletry items out to guests and helping our guests with general enquiries.



BREAK TIME – 12.30pm

As the café closes staff and volunteers take a brief break from serving for lunch before they clean the dining room and prepare for Open Pantry services.



GUEST SUPPORT MEETINGS – 1pm

Soul Café has two meeting rooms on level 1 and today SMARTRecovery is meeting in one and Gamblers Anonymous in the other. We also have our Social Worker and Mental Health Clinician working alongside our guests through the afternoon.



OPEN PANTRY SERVICE – 1pm

There is already a long queue of Soul guests when we reopen our doors for pantry. Guests come into Pantry four at a time and fill shopping bags with the staples that will help them make it through the week. Reception is still open and assisting guests alongside other attending services we may have in.



ALMOST DONE – 2pm

Pantry service closes and the floor team ready the dining room for breakfast tomorrow. Staff turn their focus to admin work while everything starts to go quiet and preparation for the next days service begins.



NO TWO DAYS ARE THE SAME AT SOUL

And while this represents a typical Wednesday in the life of Soul, in May 2020 Soul is also putting the finishing touches on organizing Sleepout for Soul 2022, preparing for the Winter Appeal, applying for several major grants and preparing to move to a new home with the Ian & Shirley Norman Foundation.

No two days are the same at Soul but we thought we'd show you what a Wednesday looks like.

SOUL VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteer force is the heart and soul of Soul Café. Every day, the Soul Café volunteer crews seek to change the lives of broken and vulnerable for the better. There is not always a solution, but at Soul Café every person is treated with dignity, kindness, and respect. Our mission is to help whoever we can however we can, and we cannot do this without our volunteers.

233 Volunteers

781 Volunteer Hours per week

This is the equivalent of 20.55 full time persons totaling an estimated \$27,818 in weekly wage costs.

The volunteer roles include kitchen, pantry, cooks, reception, administration, events, team leaders, drivers, cleaners, attending services, coaching and guest support. Soul Café is so appreciative of all our volunteers and could not be prouder of how they have handled the ongoing uncertainty of Covid, constantly adapting to provide our guests with the best possible support we can offer.

Soul CAFÉ was established in 2003 by LifeChurch and recognizing the importance of volunteers in March 2022 LifeChurch gifted Soul Café with Penny, a part time chaplain to support the wellbeing of our volunteers.



Soul Volunteer Story

VOLUNTEER STORY: Meet Shay

Shay has been a valuable part of the Soul family since 2017 and currently volunteers on the Wednesday brekkie shift. She loves nature, her support network and being involved in the local community. She's currently in her third year of social work at university.



What have you learnt from Soul?

"That everyone has a story and everyone has incredible strengths. It's so important not to judge a person and their life experiences but listen to them, hear them, and be there for them. Connection is everything."

"I continue to volunteer because I love it! Especially the relationships I have formed with guest's volunteers and staff."

SOUL STAFF

Matt, Sue, Lorraine, Jocelyne, Penny, Nic, Michelle and Tim.

1 Full Time and 7 Part Time Staff

188 hours per week the equivalent of 4.9 full time persons

Jocelyne the Soul Social Worker is sponsored by ElectroDry, Bondi Chai & Orica to provide direct guest support.

Tim the Soul Mental Health Clinician is sponsored

by Port Waratah Coal Services to provide direct guest mental health support.

47% of Soul staff hours is directly invested in supporting guests. The remaining 53% of Soul staff hours is invested in management, supporting volunteers, fundraising, admin and thus indirectly invested in supporting guests by keeping Soul Café operating.

Soul Café is a genuinely volunteer driven charity with lean administration costs.

MORE THAN A MEAL

The meal is just the start, it serves as a catalyst for something much bigger. A kind word, a gesture smile, and time shared over a meal builds trust and connects a bridge to help guests to services

and support that can move them up and out of their current situation. A monthly haircut can uplift and change a person's day for the better. SMART Recovery can empower them to escape addiction.

SERVICES & PROGRAMS

ATTENDING SERVICES:

1,430 TOTAL OCCASIONS OF SERVICE 1 APRIL 2021 – 31 MARCH 2022 including 141 vulnerable people Covid Vaccinated. 29 AVERAGE WEEKLY OCCASIONS OF SERVICE.

Little things tend to make a big difference at Soul. A simple blanket can lead to a good warm nights sleep which in turn might lead to a more positive meeting with Centrelink which might lead to solving a small problem with payments that eases the pressure on someone's daily budget which in turn may lead to an increased ability to sleep at night.

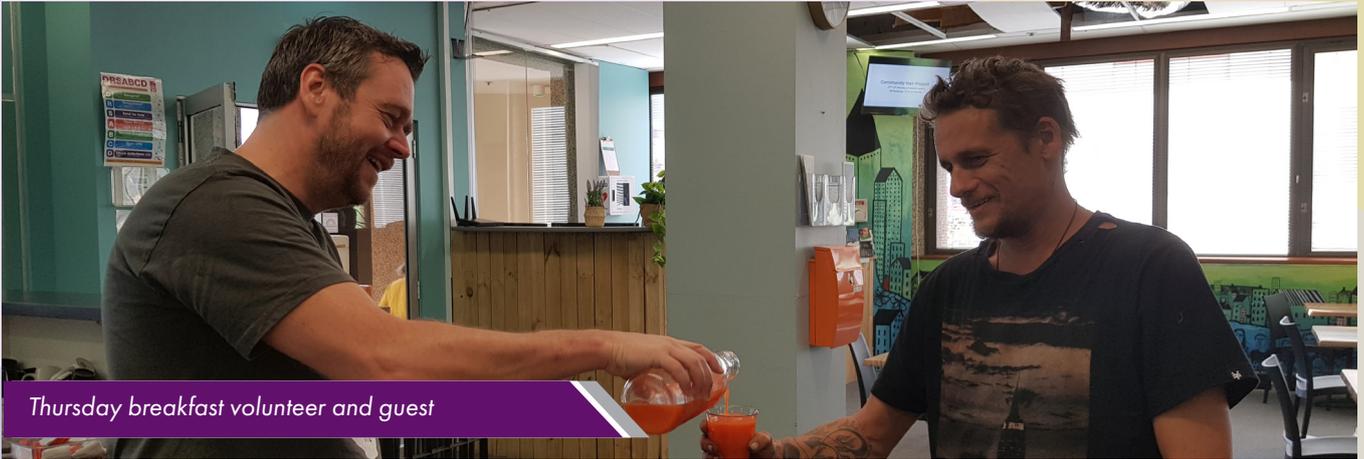
Accommodation Assistance
Alcoholics Anonymous
Audiology
Barber
Blankets, Swags, Jackets, Socks, Beanies
Centrelink Outreach
Chiropractic Clinic
Community Service Program
Department of Community & Justice (Housing Outreach)
Covid-19 Vaccination Clinic
Gamblers Anonymous
Hairdresser
Hygiene Care Packs
Internet/telephone access

Job Support Hub
Laundry Service
Soul Medical Clinic
Mental Health Clinic
Narcotics Anonymous
NDIS advocacy
Podiatry Clinic
Random Souls Music Group
SMART Recovery
Social Work Hub
Support for letters and forms
SWAGS
School, TAFE & University Student Placement Programs
Women's Connect Group
Work Development Orders





A workplace volunteering day at Soul



Thursday breakfast volunteer and guest



Coaching at Soul



Street service in lockdown



OzHarvest delivery at Soul

COVID VAX MINI CLINIC

During that period of 2021 when everyone was struggling to access vaccination appointments Soul Café was able to provide a Pfizer vaccination clinic for **141 vulnerable guests** with the help of Dr Ben Ewald & HNEH. Soul really appreciated particularly Dr Ewalds support with helping keep our vulnerable Guests safe.



SOCIAL WORK AT SOUL

At Soul Café we are always trying new things that might benefit our Guests and one of the most exciting new initiatives at Soul is our Social Worker. In 2021 **ElectroDry**, **Bondi Chai** and **Orica** joined the Soul family committing to sponsoring a social worker wage for the next 2 years. In October 2021 Jocelyne commenced as the Social Worker at Soul Café and she has been run off her feet ever since. The Social Work position has quickly become an effective support for guests and an essential part of Soul Café's convergence of help providing dozens of occasions of service weekly.

Social Work Story: * names changed for privacy

Jamie first met our social worker in mid-January. He presented at the breakfast service and shared some of his story with our social worker, Jocelyne. Jamie had spent the previous night in the Emergency Department at the Mater Hospital due to mental health concerns. Moreover, he was considering leaving his home, to live in his car, due to the anti-social behaviour in his neighbourhood.

Together, Jamie and Jocelyne explored different approaches to address Jamie's mental health challenges and strategies the anti-social behaviour of his neighbours. They completed a Housing Pathways transfer application and sought additional supports for Jamie by establishing collaborative partnerships with Disability Advocacy, HopeStreet, Community Disability Alliance Hunter, Victim Services, and Hunter Integrated Living.

Jamie is still on a long journey and working hard with his team to overcome a substantial number of barriers that prevent him from accessing affordable housing in a peaceful neighbourhood.

At this stage, Jamie is awaiting his transfer to a new home. In the meantime, he is engaging with supports to declutter and tidy his current unit. He keeps busy by attending Soul meal services and is just about to start regular counselling. Jamie is incredibly resilient, and we are so proud of his efforts!



SOUL MEDICAL CLINIC

Brunker Road General Practice

At Brunker Road Medical Centre

Soul Café is a much-needed convergence of help for the vulnerable who 'slip through the cracks' of health and other services accessed by the broader community. The Soul Medical Clinic, established by Dr Milton Sales in 2010, provides weekly medical care, prescriptions, and referrals to Soul guests.

After a brief hiatus due to the 2021 COVID lockdown the Soul Medical Clinic is back up and running supporting the medical needs of Souls most vulnerable guests. The Soul Medical Clinic also covers the costs of prescription medications for guests who might not have otherwise been able to afford them. Thank you to all the GP's who have volunteered their time and skills again this year to care for some of the most vulnerable in our community.

SOUL MENTAL HEALTH CLINIC

The Soul Mental Health Clinic exists to provide Soul guests with mental health support in a non-threatening, friendly, familiar environment. It is a vital service for the guest family that attend Soul helping to assess when they are in crisis, giving advice on medications for addictions and making referrals to health services.



Following Covid sessions have been returning to normal and provided on average 12 occasions of service per week in 2021. In April 2020, Port Waratah Coal Service approved a two year cycle of funding (\$40,758 per year) for the Mental Health Clinic. This generous grant ensures that the Soul Mental Health Clinic will continue providing our guests with support 25hrs a week.



GUEST STORY

Meet Marty – Regular Breakfast and Lunch attender

"I started coming to Soul around 2021, when I was destitute and living out of garage which was in an abandoned building in the CBD in Newcastle. I was feeling very low, hungry but especially feeling unwanted. "

"I walked passed Soul one day and saw people lining up, so I asked what this was and joined the line. The services at Soul provided me with blankets, winter clothes, meals, food to takeaway. A Soul team member was chatting to me, he asked about where I was living as I told him, he says let's see what we can do, working together I got a referral to housing, and now have my unit which I am happily living in. "

*"I would say about Soul Café, it is one of the best services for disadvantaged people in NSW. The volunteers and staff are so caring for us and their approach to allow people to use their services to do better for themselves is a measure of success. **This is my family.**"*



SOUL FUNDRAISING

Soul Café is a genuinely volunteer driven charity and receives no government funding. It is the generous Newcastle community that financially supports Soul and so Soul Café is very much a “**compassionate community response to some deep community needs**”.

Our annual major fundraiser is Sleepout for Soul. Growing from humble beginnings many years ago, Sleepout 2021 had 351 participants and raised \$268,639 to support vulnerable people. Sleepout is one of the highlights of our year and one of the few opportunities for so many of the people who financially support Soul to gather together as a community.

In addition to Sleepout, individuals, families, groups, businesses and corporations donated generously to other Soul Appeals including:

\$93,210 to the Christmas Appeal

\$58,995 to the Winter Appeal

Soul Café appreciates the generous financial support of Newcastle and we at Soul consider ourselves privileged to be part of a genuine “compassionate community response to some deep community needs”.

SOUL GOVERNANCE

Soul Café is a business name held by LifeShapers Family Services Trust which is a registered charity. Life Church LTD (CAN: 069 609 356) is the corporate trustee for Life Shapers Family Services Trust (ABN: 67 385 398 045). The charity is part of the vision and mission of Life Church. The Trust is managed by a board of Trustees comprising of:

RICK PROSSER: TRUST CHAIRMAN

HOWARD MOLE: VICE CHAIRMAN

DAVID ZAMMIT: TRUSTEE

ANTHONY CUMMINS: TRUSTEE

LINDA ROLLAND: TRUSTEE



The crowd at Sleepout for Soul



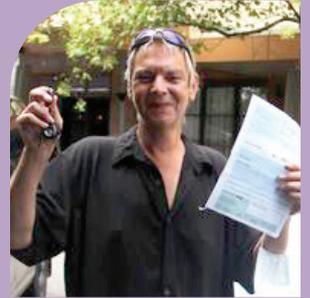
Donors to the Christmas Appeal come in all sizes



Smiles all around at Soul

TROY'S SOUL STORY:

At Soul we do whatever we can for whoever we can with whatever we have. And recently all the pieces came together perfectly when Monday brekky volunteer Rob approached us on behalf of his friend Ben who wanted to help change the life of a guest by providing them with a car for free.



Ben said "Our car has been a workhorse for us and we knew someone would get far greater value out of receiving it, compared to trading it in - for a limited benefit for ourselves. If we can help relieve the stress of not being mobile (or having a vehicle always breaking down) while juggling work, school and family, by donating our car, we consider that a huge win."

We couldn't think of anyone who could benefit more from a car than our guest Troy. Last year Troy was in a serious incident which sees him visiting the John Hunter Hospital for spinal treatment three days a week for at least the next 4 months. For the last 9 months Troy has been relying on the ever changing and sometimes unreliable public transport timetable. Usually catching 2-3 buses one way just to get to appointments, visit family, come to Soul and having to shop every two days as he can only manage 1-2 shopping bags as he's limited by the bus and having to walk full time with a cane.

We surprised Troy with Ben's second hand car which Troy describes as "life-changing." He said he couldn't take the smile off his face and struggled to sign the rego papers as he couldn't stop shaking out of excitement. Troy says having a car will allow him so many freedoms that will make life so much easier.

Troy says all he needs to do now is make a driving playlist! Thank you Ben for this life changing gift. Troy can't wait to hit the road over the weekend and enjoy all the little luxuries that come with being a driver!



If you would like to make a donation to Soul Cafe:

Online

For an automatic tax deductible receipt go to: <https://soulcafe.org.au/>

Direct Deposit

BSB: 032-505

Account: 299497

Account: Lifeshapers Family Services

Reference: your name

If you would like a receipt for your direct deposit please contact the Soul office on (02) 4926 1758 (Monday-Thursday) or email: admin@soulcafe.org.au



More Soul
Guest Stories